

The Sun

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New York in the Constructive Mileage Grab.

The Forty-second Congress earned deathless dishonor by voting to its members, on the eve of adjournment, a retroactive increase of salary. There was nothing in the Constitution or statutes to prevent the great back pay grab of March 3, 1873; but that cowardly and greedy performance encountered retributive justice in the form of public opinion, and the stripes left by the lash were lasting.

Day before yesterday the House of Representatives of the Fifty-eighth Congress, by a vote of 90 to 79, fastened upon the General Deficiency Appropriation bill an allowance of \$100,000, or thereabouts, to pay Senators and Representatives mileage from Washington to their homes, and from their homes back to the capital, during the "infinitesimal recess" of December, 1903.

No such journey was made by any Senator or member of the House. No claim, moral or legal, exists for one dollar of travelling expense when there was no travelling, and could be no travelling.

The whole theory of the constructive recess, set up for political reasons by ingenious executive mathematicians and metaphysicians at a time of executive emergency, has just been demolished by the Senate committee's report on the subject, prepared by Mr. SPOONER. Yet, even if metaphysics tolerated the idea of the infinitesimal recess, ordinary honesty and a decent regard for public opinion would forbid its employment as a pretext for the transfer of public money from the Treasury to pockets of the trustees of that public money by the votes of those trustees. The transaction is as infamous as the grab which distinguished the last hours of the Forty-second Congress.

We observe that the \$100,000 paid upon the Treasury was led by a New York Congressman, the Hon. "JIM" SHERMAN of Utica. Nine other New York members, we are sorry to say, were among the Hon. "JIM's" accomplices. This is the list which concerns the citizens of the Empire State:

JAMES S. SHERMAN of Utica, Republican.
WILLIAM H. DRAVER of Lansingburgh, Republican.
JOHN J. FITZGERALD of Brooklyn, Democrat.
JOSEPH A. GOULDEN of Fordham, Democrat.

IRA E. RIDER of New York, Democrat.
WILLIAM B. RYAN of Buffalo, Democrat.
FRANCIS E. SHORER of New York, Democrat.
GEORGE J. SMITH of Kingston, Republican.
GEORGE N. SOUTHWICK of Albany, Republican.

FRANK E. WILSON of Brooklyn, Democrat.
Four Republicans and six Democrats. No party lines in graft!

The good fame of the Congress about to expire rests now with the Senate. Surely a project of petty larceny like the constructive mileage grab will get no help at that end of the Capitol!

Mrs. Jane Lathrop Stanford.

The death of Mrs. LELAND STANFORD at Honolulu, apparently the result of a poison criminally administered to her, brings up recollections of the romantic and tragic history of California with which this remarkable woman was so prominently associated.

LELAND STANFORD, her husband, who died in 1893, was one of the early settlers who were drawn to California after the discovery of gold in 1848. He was not among the "Argonauts" who rushed thither in the following year, his arrival having been three years later; but he began his California career as a gold miner. At Sacramento there was already settled COLLIS PORTER HUNTINGTON, who had been a "Forty-niner," a trader he had become prosperous as a rougher rather than as a hunter after gold directly. Two years after the arrival of LELAND STANFORD, HUNTINGTON took as partner in his business MARK HOPKINS, CHARLES CROCKER, a "Forty-niner," was another of the traders of the town, and LELAND STANFORD became still another. Sacramento then was a rough mining town, but bustling with trade with the mining camps, and all four of these men prospered rapidly and greatly. By the time of the civil war they had become the "Big Four," joined in pushing forward the project for the building of the Central Pacific Railroad, then regarded as a crazy scheme.

It is said that of the four the need of such a railroad first occurred to LELAND STANFORD when, in 1859, he saw a huge freight wagon drawn by twenty mules pull out from HUNTINGTON's store for the Comstock mines at Virginia City, though the practicability of the route over the Sierra Nevada had been vainly urged on California by THOMAS J. JUDAH, a civil engineer. Mr. HUNTINGTON, impressed by the suggestion, at once gave to it the practical impulse of his vigorous enterprise and extraordinary genius for execution. In July, 1862, the first Pacific Railroad act was passed by Congress, largely through his influence. For the construction of the railroad one section, the central, was given to the Union Pacific Railroad Company, and the western division to the Central Pacific Railroad Company. At the organization of the Central Pacific, STANFORD was elected president and HUNTINGTON vice-president, and they, together with CROCKER and HOPKINS, were the heaviest holders of the stock.

It is not necessary to follow the his-

tory of that gigantic construction, whose successful accomplishment made them known throughout the Union as the "Big Four." All of them became prominent among the rich and powerful men of this country. Of the four STANFORD was the best educated in the conventional sense. Before going to California he was a lawyer in Wisconsin. He was also one of the number who had large political abilities and ambitions. He was a delegate to the convention which nominated LINCOLN in 1860; the next year was elected Governor of California, and in 1885 to the United States Senate. In the last year also, he, together with his wife, now dead, founded the Leland Stanford Junior University at Palo Alto, Cal., in memory of their son of that name, who had died in 1884 at the age of 17 years. They conveyed to the university landed property representing an aggregate value of many millions, and Senator STANFORD when he died left it a bequest of \$2,500,000. Apparently in fulfillment of his wishes, Mrs. STANFORD turned over to it practically the whole of the estate, so that the total endowment was toward \$30,000,000. The university is thus the most magnificent memorial ever raised by paternal and maternal love in pious memory of a dead son.

Mrs. STANFORD gave also the chief thought and the most anxious solicitude of her later years to the management and development of the memorial university. She was practically the master spirit in the enterprise, and as such she did not escape criticism of her conception of its educational needs and the methods to be adopted in its administration and instruction. It was complained that the trustees of the university were merely her subordinates and that she herself was a woman of eccentricities which interfered with the wise scholastic development of the institution.

None of her critics, however, could deny that she was a woman of remarkable ability and strength of character. Her devotion to the university erected as a memorial to her only son was absolute in its selfishness.

Both Mrs. STANFORD and her husband were natives of Albany county in the State of New York, and in age they were only one year apart, he having been born in 1824 and she in 1825. Besides her munificent gifts to the Leland Stanford University, she built and endowed a children's hospital at Albany and gave a large sum to kindergarten schools in San Francisco. Maternal devotion was thus a passion with her which no lapse of time after the death of her son, twenty-one years ago, had served to cool, for practically all her benefactions were made as a memorial to him.

Mr. Cannon at the Twelfth Hour.

The Washington correspondent of the *New York Herald* reports that on Wednesday a "member of the Administration" called upon Speaker CANNON and informed him that "it would be agreeable to the President" if Congress saw fit to increase the compensation of his office prior to March 4.

We have no doubt that it would be agreeable to the President, as it would to his friends, and to the people of the country generally. Few there are who will declare that Mr. ROOSEVELT is not fairly entitled to receive a salary of \$100,000 a year for his services.

But that the alleged member of the Administration was instructed or authorized by Mr. ROOSEVELT to appeal to Speaker CANNON we do not for a moment believe. The President's attitude with regard to the question of his salary has been marked by all the propriety and delicacy which self-respect suggests under the circumstances. When we consider his great power to influence legislation, and to produce results in Congress according to his own desires, there is sufficient evidence of his reserve in the mere fact that the movement for additional compensation was not spurred from the White House long ago; and that it was left to THE SUN, in the last days of the session, to point out the brevity of the opportunity.

Again, we can scarcely believe that Speaker CANNON, in replying to the alleged "member of the Administration," used the language attributed to him by the *Herald's* reporter:

"Why, in heaven's name, didn't you tell me this long ago? How can we do it now? Here we are, sitting every day that appropriates money, and under rules that we cannot change unless we are ready to let in the deluge. I am willing to give the President \$100,000 a year, because any President earns it; but it is now too late. What makes me mad is that it should be kept back until the twelfth hour is about to strike."

If Mr. CANNON said that, we say, with all respect, Gammon! The Maynard bill increasing the President's salary was introduced and referred to the Committee on Appropriations nearly two months ago, and it has never been reported by that committee. Did Speaker CANNON, or Mr. HENRY WATSON, or Mr. DAILEY, or Gen. GROSVENOR expect that Mr. ROOSEVELT was coming to the Capitol to lobby for a measure by which he would benefit personally? Mr. CANNON's wrath ought to be turned upon himself and his assistants in the leadership of the majority for neglecting the business until the twelfth hour. Nobody else is to blame.

Equally absurd is the Speaker's excuse that the requirements of rigid economy made it impossible for him and his associates on the Committee on Rules to permit this measure of justice and decent treatment of the President to pass in the last hours of the session. On that same day the House voted into an appropriation bill an unearned gratuity to its own members and the members of the Senate, amounting to \$100,000, or within \$10,000 of the sum required to pay Mr. ROOSEVELT an additional \$50,000 a year for the whole term of four years for which he has been elected. Moreover, one of Mr. CANNON's colleagues on the Committee on Rules, Gen. CHARLES H. GROSVENOR of Ohio, was recorded as voting for that conscienceless grab of the people's money.

The Stewart bill in the Senate remains. One day, or perhaps one day and a half, is left of opportunity. Will the Senate send the measure over to the House in such form that it will be beyond the power of a single objector like BAKER of Brook-

lyn to block it—in such shape as will test the sincerity of Speaker CANNON's professions as reported above?

A Few Redcoats Left.

Comment is made that "for the first time in centuries the British soldier has left our continent entirely to its own military devices." The withdrawal of England's soldiery from Halifax and Esquimaux does not seem to be clearly understood on our side of the line.

Esquimaux, on the island of Vancouver, has been a naval base rather than a military garrison. As ships came and went, and as fortifications of some kind are desirable if not necessary parts of naval bases, that station has been occupied by a small body of artillerymen and engineers, about 400 in all. There have been no infantry bodies at the post. England abandons the naval base for the reason that her commerce in North Pacific waters is not sufficient to make a local squadron either necessary or desirable.

Halifax has been occupied by a battalion of infantry in addition to the artillery and engineers. The infantry is to be withdrawn. Its place will probably be taken by a Canadian regiment, but England's artillery and engineers will still remain in charge of the fortifications.

With her post at Bermuda, England sees no necessity for maintaining, as she has of late, 2,000 men at Halifax. It is not understood that the point is to be abandoned as a British naval base. There will still be a few redcoats left on the continent.

New Consuls.

A wholesome note is sounded in the announcement that changes are to be made in the personnel of the consular corps immediately after March 4. This is good as far as it goes, but it would have been better had that pigeonhole Consular bill been brought to light during this session of Congress and a sounder and broader basis established for the changes in the corps.

There is even a suspicious little rift in the present announcement. It appears in the statement that nearly all consuls who have served for two terms will be ousted. That is not where the evils of the service lie. Length of service is not in itself an evidence of unfitness. Its argument would be quite to the contrary, and a removal made only because a man has served for two terms would be no less pernicious than an unfit appointment. A purpose to remove deadwood and install a better quality of consular timber is most commendable, but it is by no means certain that the service needs ploughing up. It does need a vigorous weeding out. The mere substitution of one set of consuls for another set of consuls is no guarantee of improvement.

Our present service, as a whole, is fairly good, and there are those who would think it excellent. Commenting on this question, the *Canadian Manufacturer* recently said:

"The consular service of the United States is, without doubt, the best and most comprehensive in the world, and to this fact is to be attributed to a great extent the large and rapidly growing export trade in manufactured products of that country; and it is to be hoped that, not neglecting any good thing that may be obtained through the British service, that of the United States will be adopted by Canada so far as possible."

The special need of the service is reform in the system rather than mere change in the personnel. The secondary consideration would be effected through the operation of the primary. It is a pity that some of the time of the present Congress could not have been being wasted in this direction instead of being wasted as so much of it has been. Much can be accomplished, however, if Mr. ROOSEVELT will make special fitness his exclusive standard for the new appointments. Even eight or ten year old deadwood may be better than certain kinds of green twigs.

Bailey on Pay and Hiredlings.

In the Senate, Wednesday night, the Hon. JOSEPH WELDEN BAILEY put forth two theories of great pith and moment.

First: Officers and men in the army "should be paid, as Senators are paid, exactly what their services are worth." Mr. BAILEY admitted ingeniously that "some Senators are paid more than they are worth and others less."

This is the application to the salaries of public officers of the principle *quantum meruit*. An impracticable application, since no court is equal to the high and fine distinctions that would arise in such cases of exact compensation.

Second: Mr. BAILEY, commenting on the word "hiredling," suggested a wide and tolerant commensality:

"I will say that perhaps that term can be applied, for in the United States Army to-day an officer will go down to dine with his own brother if that brother happens to be a private."

We infer that if Mr. BAILEY's genius had taken him into military life he would have messed with his men. But, properly speaking, is not an officer, and even a Senator, as much of a "hiredling" as a private soldier?

The semi-official investigations made by the Board of Health concerning bacteria on money and the most effective means of neutralizing it have a high chemical value, but as a salutary incitement to thrift they are likely to be without much effect.

Pennies, copper pennies, old fashioned "coppers," the coin of the proletariat, are described as wholly innocuous. There is no danger in them. Nickels, the five cent pieces of the subway, the trolley and the phonographs, have germs; ten cent pieces have many more, and twenty-five cent silver pieces are dangerous even to the touch in handling. Silver half dollars are not only doubly dangerous on account of bacteria, but are a constant menace to the health of every person unfortunate enough to possess them.

But it is in regard to bills, the greenback and yellowback currency, the great circulating medium of the republic, that the conclusions of the Board of Health experts are the most damaging to providence and saving. The dollar bill is found on examination to have perhaps 2,000 bacteria; the two dollar bill, 6,000; five dollar bill, 28,000; and twenty dollar bill, 150,000.

The obvious conclusion from these figures is that coin accumulations of more than 30 cents in the pocket of any one individual threaten danger, and possession of any currency is incompatible with life insurance risks.

More injurious even than the deductions of the Board of Health experts in the matter of bacteria on coin or currency is the advice, freely given by their experts: "Don't keep money; get rid of it." There are many reckless and extravagant persons in all communities who are so favorably inclined to such a man that they will not need the technical opinion of Board of Health experts to cause them to persist in their high rolling.

Virtue has made another home run. By a vote of 126 to 83 the Massachusetts House of Representatives has refused to amend the "semicoin" law as to permit licensed innholders to sell liquor until midnight.

For the present, 11 o'clock will continue to be the curfew hour for drink in good old Boston. There are no strangers there, Boston doesn't want them. The constables and tithing men clear the streets when the 9 o'clock bell rings. Strangers go to New York by the first train. The natives go to bed at 9. Why should hotels be allowed to sell rum to persons who have been at profane stage plays and are sitting up as late as 12 P. M.?

It is a principle of the semicoin law, we believe, that a man has not the right to stay himself with flagons even in his own house; that he may be yanked thence by policemen without a warrant. Moreover, he may be judged on the strength of his breath, or rather on the sensation thereof received by a policeman's nostrils.

A sad place for the wet. Still, it would be a shame to take to rate too high the passion of Massachusetts for the liquor regulation. The philosophy of liquor regulation or prohibition in Massachusetts rests on two grand propositions:

1. Mind somebody else's business.
2. Drink out of a flask; it is cheaper.

With all due sympathy with the sorrow or indignation of the Indian Bureau because a band of Sioux, beautiful of blanket, a galaxy of war paint, a forest of feathers, has come to Washington, how can we but have asked, we must forgive a truncheon so decorative in its results. These unpermitted wanderers are waved away from the inaugural parade by the Hon. FRANCIS E. LEFF, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He authorizes and stamps as official six distinguished Amerindians, including our reformed friend GERONIMO, the Hon. BUCKSIE CHARLIE and the Hon. HOLLOW HORN.

These honoraries will be in honor to the procession. They are entitled to full faith and credit from the spectators; and the Director of the Bureau of American Ethnology should show them every attention.

Still, those forbidden Sioux might give a kinder word than Commissioner LEFF gives them. Hear his reasons for laying them under the ban:

"They came unasked and have no right to expect a parade merely because they are Indians. We are to grant the request of this band I would rather be forced to act in the same manner toward every Indian wishing to participate in the parade. The result would be that everywhere, overshadowing everything else, both in number and in brilliancy of costume."

Are the Caucasians so afraid of the splendor of their copper colored brethren? Why, the Hon. STEPHEN BLOCH and his councilmen, the Senators, the Supreme Court, the W. Durham Marching Club of Philadelphia, with its ochre spats, can outdo them.

St. Patrick's Church.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I read with interest Mr. O'Rourke's letter on St. Patrick's Church in this morning's *Sun*. I think he misunderstands the nature and the scope of the work proposed, as well as the intent that underlies it all.

I write as a member of the congregation and as one who would not consent to the taking away or reducing of any part of the church's endowment, and who would not consent to the building of a new church, old and tender associations rather. But surely between taking away and augmenting there is a wide difference.

The inscription on the stones of the churchyard are no longer decipherable, and the stone itself is crumbling away because of exposure to the weather for so many years. As a matter of fact, the greater number of the stones are so rotten that they are in danger of falling, and the result would be a disgraceful and expensive one.

The right reverend rector of St. Patrick's is not, I am sure, committed absolutely to the plan proposed. He is only a man, and he does think that something ought to be done to make permanent the record of these Irishmen who lived and died in this city. I am sure that Mr. Kearney would not in this matter be less than the most generous and the most patriotic of men.

I am in hearty agreement with Mr. O'Rourke in his opinion that the plan proposed is a noble one, and that it will be well for the city to have a record of the Irishmen who lived and died in this city. I am sure that Mr. Kearney would not in this matter be less than the most generous and the most patriotic of men.

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THE PROPOSED PORTO RICAN LOAN.

WASHINGTON, March 2.—News despatches from Porto Rico report that the House of Delegates has passed, by a unanimous vote, a bill authorizing an insular loan of \$4,000,000 for public improvements. It is also stated that the Executive Council favors the bill.

Nominally the proceeds of this loan, if it is effected, are to be devoted to public improvements, road building, bridge construction and similar enterprises. But the bill also provides that out of "unimproved funds" loans may be made to distressed agriculturists. From some discussion in the press of the island, continued now for many months, it is a fair inference that the real purpose of the loan is its use along the line of the incidental rather than that of the main proposition. If this is the fact, as it doubtless is, an interesting situation is developed.

Out of all the available information regarding the island one fact stands out clearly. That is that the economic situation is deplorable. The proposed method of relieving it is, however, decidedly open to question. The industry most seriously affected is coffee, the most important in Porto Rico. For years it has been the industry upon which the great majority of the islanders have been dependent for their livelihood. Its present depression is due to the loss of the market in which the berry is sold, and the American occupation. The political change out of the former outlet and provided no substitute. The complaint ever since has been that the distress in the island is due to the lack of market in which the berry could be sold at prices which would pay producers even the cost of production. This fact makes it quite difficult to see just how the situation is to be relieved by loaning money to planters to enable them to increase their production. The evident need of the island is a profitable market rather than an increase of a product which must be sold at a loss or, at best, at a margin of profit which does not, from a business point of view, justify a continuation of the enterprise.

The same proposition applies in the general way to the expenditure of the proceeds of the loan for the purpose of improving interior transportation, unless improved road systems would so reduce the cost of transportation as to bring the producing cost of coffee to a figure which would show a profit on its production and its delivery at shipping points. The present system involves the use of pack mules, and to some extent at least this must continue in any case.

A system of highways which would reach all plantations directly would be quite out of the question. Very good roads, serving as main arteries, already reach and traverse the most important coffee districts. The extension of that system to individual plantations at public cost is a measure of doubtful economic wisdom and of doubtful political soundness.

The plan of borrowing money to save a dying industry along the lines proposed is open to question. No doubt the planters, most of whom, by the way, are Spaniards and not Porto Ricans, would be glad to borrow, particularly if they are bankrupt. But if their credit is so exhausted that they cannot borrow from those whose business is money lending, the security which they can offer for a loan from the Government would at its best seem to be of doubtful value.

It was reported a few days ago that it had been decided to send to this country a commercial agent whose work should be the advancement of Porto Rico's commercial interests. That is a step in the right direction, provided the agent be properly qualified for his position. In 1897, the year before the war, the island produced a little more than 50,000,000 pounds of coffee. This amount is 10 per cent of the quantity consumed in the United States last year. Given a market, the output of the Porto Rican berry might be doubled in about fifteen years. At that time 100,000,000 pounds will probably be little if at all above 5 per cent of the American consumption. The quality of the berry should give a place in our markets for all that can be produced.

Backed with a suitable sum of money for advertising purposes, a competent commercial agent should be able to place in American coffee pots, inside of two years, every pound that the island can grow, at prices remunerative to growers and to their employees.

The island can get along without a debt. Her salvation from the economic how-woes is in a market for her coffee. The market is here, and it is susceptible of development along a line of modern business methods. THE SUN advised this course some months ago, and it still appears a sounder policy than the acquisition of a debt for the purpose of enabling planters to produce coffee which they must sell at unprofitable prices if they can sell it at all.

Generous Offer to Dr. Oler.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I do not know Dr. Oler as to physical or intellectual strength except so far as he has been disclosed to me in your paper. I assume he is 40 years of age or less. I am two months and more in my eighty-first year.

I will promise Oler a good back ache to carry to his friends at Oxford if THE SUN will, on the eve of his departure, arrange in its building a quiet meeting with gloves or bare knuckles (choice of weapons to be his), provided THE SUN will agree to have Dr. Oler's men will not interfere before, during or after the event. This promise must include District Attorney Jerome.

To all my friends in the part of Dr. Oler, I am a proper man to add that I never had any training as a boxer, never struck a human being with my fist; I am willing to give him the chance to "do me up" in body or in mind. A. J. P. NEW YORK, March 1.

Can Any Experiment Fail?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—"W. M." in his letter to THE SUN of yesterday, says that the experiment of Nova Scotia seems to question my veracity because his ridiculous experiment failed. I seriously question his veracity if he states that any experiment can fail. An experiment may be disappointed in its results, but from the very nature of any experiment it is impossible for it to fail. I have always thought that we got our wisdom from the fact that we never had any training as a boxer, never struck a human being with my fist; I am willing to give him the chance to "do me up" in body or in mind. A. J. P. NEW YORK, March 1.